

Changing Homeland Security: The Year in Review – 2008

Christopher Bellavita

Everything we hear is an opinion, not a fact. Everything we see is a perspective, not the truth.
-Marcus Aurelius (121-180)

What events and trends shaped the homeland security terrain last year?

In December we asked members of the Naval Postgraduate School's extended homeland security network¹ to respond to two questions:

- *From your perspective – and using whatever criteria you'd like – what would you say was a top homeland security-related issue or story in 2008? And why?*
- *Please identify something you consider to be an emerging homeland security issue. (For the purposes of this question, emerging issues are embryonic concerns that may develop into significant problems or opportunities in the future.)*

Their responses highlighted the 2008 presidential election, the terrorist attack in Mumbai, the economic meltdown, the chaos on the southern border, the continued quest to define homeland security, and an expanding threat spectrum, including the cyber threat – possibly the year's most underreported homeland security issue.

Taken together, the responses from the NPS community of practitioners and academics who work in and think about homeland security everyday tell a story about the field's continuing evolution. Before presenting the full survey results, here is the summary of the 2008 story.

THE YEAR IN BRIEF

Barack Obama's election portends changes in homeland security and in the Department of Homeland Security. The changes might be foundational – for example separating FEMA from DHS – or they may emerge from the muddle of disjointed incrementalism.

Homeland security was not an important issue during the campaign. This and other evidence suggests homeland security has become a second-tier policy issue, more important to a small group of bureaucrats, elected officials, corporations and scholars than to the electorate. One respondent said the public will not pay attention "until we bleed again."

The Mumbai attack reminded us that the bad guys are still around. They do not need nuclear or biological weapons. Low-tech attacks on soft targets in the U.S. can create high-consequence events. Weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a threat to the nation.² But attention to WMD threats may distract state, local, and federal agencies from the training, resources, or focus appropriate to prevent Mumbai-like attacks.

The economy presents another challenge to homeland security. The same state and local agencies we rely on to prevent and respond to homeland security incidents face significant budget cuts. Public safety agencies must decide how to provide basic services to their constituents. Increasingly the issue is which people to layoff and which services

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to no longer provide. Homeland security is becoming a "nice-to-have" service in a growing number of communities.

Obama has proposed a multi-billion dollar initiative to create jobs and revitalize the nation's infrastructure. Depending how security concerns are incorporated, the program could mitigate or amplify basic homeland security challenges.

Some good things happened in 2008.³ It was one more year the nation was not successfully attacked at home.⁴ The response to the Gulf hurricanes, the Midwest floods and the western wildfires was improved when compared with similar incidents in prior years. Borders are less porous. The numbers of illegal immigrants did not increase substantially and – for a variety of reasons – may even have decreased. Port security has been enhanced. Resiliency has taken on increasing importance. Even the DHS efforts to have September treated seriously as National Preparedness Month may be taking root in the nation.

Americans continue to support government efforts to prevent terrorist attacks. But, as one respondent phrased it: "There does seem to be a sense that America must maintain its moral compass and not alienate itself from the rest of the world.... Being the leader by example of democratic principles for the world is still important."

Coordination and information sharing among federal, state, and local agencies continues to improve. Some of our respondents believe critical problems remain in this domain. One person noted that the Maryland State Police admission that they conducted improper surveillance on Americans could have national implications for fusion center operations.

The homeland security threat spectrum widened in 2008. In part, that may reflect an empirical reality. It may also be the aggregated perception of people whose job is to find threats and prevent them from being realized. More people were killed last year in the Mexican drug wars than died on September 11, 2001. The instability of the southern border presents new opportunities for terrorist safe havens. The specter of homegrown terrorism has not abated. Naturalized citizens of Somali descent traveled to Africa for jihad. One Minneapolis man, Shirwa Ahmed, blew himself up in a suicide attack in Northern Somali. The election of the first black American president may reignite the racial hatred of more traditional domestic terrorist groups.

Secretary Chertoff called cyber security the nation's "last major vulnerability."⁵ Cyber is also a global threat. Last year saw an increase in the number of efforts to penetrate government and private sector networks. The penetrations could be reconnaissance probes before a wider domestic operation. According to one of our respondents, during the Russian invasion of Georgia "a criminal network believed to be operating in Russia was conducting cyber attacks against the Georgian government from computer servers located in the United States."

The international scene highlights additional threats. Afghanistan remains Al Qaeda's incubator. In addition to Mexico, trends in China, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Russia, Africa, and Venezuela remind us that attending to homeland security does not mean looking only within the country's border. The number of nations with a presence in space is growing. There are homeland security implications to this development.

Climate change, economic security, food, water, and energy security are seen by some of our respondents as meta hazards that could have a more significant impact on domestic security than terrorism.

The public health and emergency health infrastructure remains inadequate to prevent and respond to significant mass casualty incidents, biological attacks, drug resistant infectious diseases and related threats. Chemical security remains a national problem. Pirates and their small boats have moved from Disney amusement to global menace.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that a politician looks forward only to the next election; a statesman looks forward to the next generation. American elections provide the opportunity to rejuvenate the nation. The year 2009 brings new women and men to responsible homeland security positions. They have the opportunity to review and learn from the work of the statesmen and women who came before them. Based on what has and has not worked, the nation's new homeland security leaders at all levels of government can write the next chapter in our continue efforts to, in Jefferson's words, "insure domestic Tranquility, [and] provide for the common defence."

TOP HOMELAND SECURITY STORIES OF 2008

The people who responded to this year's survey did not mention every major issue.⁶ The findings are as much a function of the interests of people who took the time to respond to a survey during the holidays as they are an unfiltered reflection of empirical reality. If themes you consider important are not mentioned here, you are invited to submit, via email, your thoughts for inclusion in the next issue of *Homeland Security Affairs*.

The survey respondents' observations that follow are arranged in the following categories:

- The Promise of Obama: The Ambiguity of Change
- The Attack in Mumbai: "This could easily happen anywhere in the US."
- The Economic Crisis: "Bin Laden's victory over America?"
- The Nature of Homeland Security: Now a Second Tier Policy Issue?
- Organizing for Homeland Security: Possible Futures, Emerging Issues
- The Department of Homeland Security: Time of Opportunity
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency: Will You Stay or Will You Go?
- The Good Things
- The Threat: Are We More Vulnerable Now than We've Been in the Past Decade?
 - The Southern Border
 - Domestic Threats
 - Cyber Threats
 - Threats From Other Nations
 - Public Health Threats
 - Other Threats
- The Culture of Preparedness: "Waiting until we bleed again"
- Meta Hazards: Things We Do To Ourselves
- Funding Concerns
- Professionalization of Homeland Security
- Information and Intelligence
- Critical Infrastructure: Jobs And Security
- Criminal Justice and Homeland Security

The article closes with three candidates for the "Homeland Security Image of the Year." But first, here is what our respondents considered to be significant trends and themes for 2008 and the future. These responses are direct quotations, lightly edited for clarity and presented without attribution; each paragraph represents one individual's thoughts.

The Promise of Obama: The Ambiguity of Change

The campaign for and election of the U.S. president represents the top homeland security issue for 2008. The two candidates articulated very different visions for the ongoing war in Iraq. One candidate presented as the man who would continue the fight until it was concluded and the enemy vanquished. The other candidate argued for a quick end to U.S. involvement. Domestic and economic issues – and virtually all talk of terrorism and homeland security – overshadowed this entire issue. Whether this was because of the issue attention cycle, threat fatigue, or economic worry, it was clear that the threat of terrorism was not on the front burner for American voters.



In 2008, the American people voted for a "new narrative" in homeland security and the so-called war on terror. President Obama's statements indicate he understands the current "military only" approach to fighting terrorists is incomplete and counterproductive. Instead, his approach seems to be to meld the hard power of the military, designed to destroy terrorism's hard core, with the so-called soft power of diplomacy, economic assistance, education, and information, designed to strengthen the mainstream in Muslim countries. Opinion polls in the Muslim world indicate the majority of Muslims believe the current war on terror is really a war on Islam by the United States and the West. We will never beat the terrorists until that perception is changed. Mr. Obama promises to make a major address in a Muslim country in the first 100 days of his administration explaining that we are not at war with Islam, but that we are fighting a common enemy: violent radical extremists who seek to hijack Islam and terrorize us all. He appears ready to reverse the cowboy diplomacy of "my way or the highway," with a search for common ground that can stop radicalization in its tracks. The success of this new narrative will determine the security of our homeland for decades to come.



In the national elections of 2008, the American public demonstrated a turning of the popular will against that part of the war on terror represented by the war in Iraq, by changing the executive branch of government from Republican to Democrat, and by increasing the Democrats' majority control of the Congress.... Despite claims by the outgoing administration that the war in Iraq is critical to the war on terror, these results indicate that, similar to the Vietnam War, the administration has failed to mobilize and sustain the popular will of its constituents. It remains to be seen what war on terror, homeland defense, and homeland security policies the incoming administration will implement.



The primary issue in the 2004 election was the threat of terrorism. The 2008 election seemed to revolve around getting revenge against the president and the other people who have been in charge of the global war on terrorism.



The top story was the one that did not happen during the presidential campaign: the lack of homeland security as an issue for debate. Homeland security was never on the radar screen and seemed to be intentionally not an issue, so the Republican candidate could not get any traction on a substantial tide-turning issue. Just as the economic downturn provided the pivotal momentum for President Obama's success, a terrorist-related event could have turned the outcome to a success for Republicans. Timing is everything in life.



The top story was the lack of focus on homeland security during the campaign and transition. In an attempt to separate candidates from the current administration, both candidates downplayed homeland security issues, with one or two minor exceptions. Some candidates published their [homeland security] positions online. Those documents are no longer available. Other candidates dismissed the issue altogether. Like it or not, homeland security is a major issue at this time in history. While it may not be on the forefront in the public eye, it requires much more attention than it has received.



The election of the first president since the DHS was formed has and will continue to significantly influence the world of homeland security.



The election will bring in a new set of players who will set a new standard for homeland security.



In the latter half of 2008, a number of organizations involved with homeland security focused on political and government transition. There are a number of groups working on documents for President Obama to read. These documents are designed to educate and influence Obama and other newly elected or appointed officials. Are these documents consistent with current direction or are they recommending change? Is there consistency in the message from these multiple documents? One would guess no. A concern that many in DHS and their homeland security partners share is the constant "crazy quilt patchwork" of direction that seems to permeate the overall homeland security effort. Will consistency in direction eventually be achieved and will these [transition] documents be helpful or hinder the efforts of pulling together for the common purpose of securing the homeland?



The Obama administration may move to limit the duplicative bureaucracies the Department of Homeland Security has created since its inception. The new administration may move to decentralized DHS offices and programs out of their cocoon in Washington, DC.



Our homeland security is critically impacted by what other countries (and their citizens) think about the intentions and behavior of the United States. If this new administration can keep the international momentum that has already started, it could have an effect on reducing future threats.



How will Obama treat homeland security? Where will his leadership take us? Will he reconsider describing the fight against terrorists as a "war?"



The [new] administration has already set the tone of debate and what is in the best interest of the country. Those vested with an interest in homeland security should examine their views from the lens of ensuring continued economic prosperity of the nation and preserving the freedoms and liberties set forth in the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, as opposed to maintaining a positional stance.



The administration change will bring new priorities shaped from a liberal socialist rather than a neoconservative perspective. I'm interested to see what the difference is once the politicians fully understand the available intelligence.



The scary thing about the election of Obama is a potential for the revival of domestic terrorists. I would hate to see how we as a nation would respond to the assassination of a president by domestic terrorists.

The Attack in Mumbai: "This could easily happen anywhere in the U.S."

The recent attacks in Mumbai demonstrate that this form of attack is possible in the U.S.A. It appeared to be relatively inexpensive, did not require extensive planning, and the terrorists were able to accomplish their goal – instilling fear and terror in support of their cause. While we look at potential threats, such as nuclear, chemical, bio, and other types of attacks, we should not take our eyes off of this emerging threat of simultaneous "Mumbai style" attacks in various parts of the U.S.A.



The top story was the bombing in Mumbai. This incident marks the evolution of complex attacks in the revival of a fifteen-year-old plan of execution for the terrorist. This incident creates new attack environments for communities to prepare for.



The Mumbai attack certainly has to be considered for placement on the list because of the effectiveness of the methods used (low-tech, soft target, high consequence), intelligence warning of the attacks (apparently heeded for a few days, then "back to normal" just prior to the attacks), and the apparent lack of readiness by local responders to quickly neutralize the situation (adequately prepared responders were hours away). I'm sure we all thought the same thing when the news broke: "This could easily happen anywhere in the U.S. today."



What do the Mumbai attacks mean for the future of anti-terrorism and future terrorist tactics?



The Mumbai attack in India demonstrated again the urban vulnerability to a small band of attackers.



The Mumbai attacks showed that asymmetric tactics used by a small, determined group can have devastating effect.



On the maritime side, the top story was the increasing concern relating to the small boat threat; this threat increased even more after the Mumbai incident.



The tactics used in India were identified by our [NPS] students repeatedly over the last five years as likely next steps by terrorists. I'm interested to see if it actually brings a change in tactics or if this was just a one-off.



It is too early to see if Mumbai will lead to new trends in attacks, but it seems likely that more quasi-military attacks will be conducted in the future.



The Mumbai attacks were noteworthy because of the tactics employed. There were no explosives, youthful perpetrators, suicidal bent, technologically advanced means and methods, prolonged implementation... all continue to indicate that the face of terrorism is changing. Relate this to Columbine, the Moscow theater, and the Beslan school killings. We may be directing our training and education efforts to the wrong threats. The local police departments will assume a much larger role than previously anticipated, and they are not ready.



There were several points where the attacks could have been disrupted had people been more sensitized to what was going on (or were less apathetic) or if the police and security forces had more capacity: hijacking of fishing vessels, transfer to small boats, walking from small boats up the pier to get in a cab. The attackers could have been disrupted during each of those steps. Once the attacks began, local law enforcement didn't have the resources to stop the attack, and it took several days for the higher end forces to get into position and be ready to assault. Why did it take so long? For us, could a similar attack happen? And what capabilities or capacity do we have to prevent or disrupt such an attack?



The Mumbai attacks were a demonstration of the continued preparation and planning that is ongoing by terrorists. The terrorists continue to attack the U.S. even though it is not on our soil. This is a message to the rest of the world, an attempt to turn U.S. allies and their people against the West.



Mumbai has caused all of us to refocus on preventing and responding to low-tech, high-consequence activities by committed terrorists and criminals in the United States. We have devoted substantial resources towards detection, prevention, and response of many WMD events. But if terrorists plan to use low-tech events in the United States (and I don't see any reason why they would not, especially given the apparent difficulty in conducting IED/WMD events), we will all have to rethink our surveillance and prevention activities if we are to effectively address them. Stop these incidents before they happen; stop them if they happen. This will become an even greater challenge, at least in the short-term, as we all struggle to address the fallout from very difficult economic times – hiring freezes, furloughs, reduction in forces, and so on.



Mumbai: for those doubters, the threat is still here!

The Economic Crisis: "Bin Laden's victory over America?"

The top issue for me is the economy this past year, and how events starting from September 2001 have shaped our financial standing with the world.



I think the top homeland security related issue is bin Laden's victory over America. After all, he said his goal was "... bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy...." Okay, okay, so I realize we did a lot of this to ourselves with unsound and risky banking and loan policies, but one can't help but wonder what impact this economic crisis will have on our national security.



I believe the top homeland security-related issue in 2008 is the meltdown of the United States and the world economy. I think it directly affects our national security in several respects. Psychological fear created by the economy further erodes the nation's confidence in the government to take care of any business There is less money available for the military, State Department, all hazards and security. ... As if we have not forgotten 9/11 and Katrina enough already, this further takes our eyes off of the ball. As some shrewd politician once said, it is the economy stupid.



The top story is the impact of the economy on homeland security and the sustainment of current capabilities.



The top story was the financial downturn. Public safety agencies at the state and local level are increasingly pressed to maintain basic services, let alone prepare for low-frequency, high-impact operations such as homeland security. Funding is increasingly needed to sustain basic public safety operations, let alone homeland security functions.



The nation's economic downturn is definitely starting to impact homeland security. Many local and state governments have experienced budget cuts that directly affect homeland security capabilities. It is predicted the economy may get worse or maintain its dismal state for a year or more before it will rebound. If this turns out to be true, even greater budget cuts can be expected. The challenge that we currently face is how we will be able to ensure homeland security with a dramatic decrease in resources. A perfect example is a reduction of the public safety workforce through layoffs due to budget cuts. Can prevention occur when all resources are expended on response? Can a timely and effective response occur?



Fire service involvement in homeland security is being affected by the failure to recognize the cost of that involvement. Current fiscal practices require departments to make decisions about the importance of what they should and can be involved in based on constrained funding. Failure to acknowledge personnel costs, which can be ongoing, will affect involvement. Equipment needs can be met, but backfill costs are stripping departments of day-to-day resources, unlike other agencies.



The obvious choice for the top story is the financial meltdown. We cannot run an effective government on any level without the financial machine to sustain it. This creates an opportunity for terrorists.



The economic crisis plays a role in diminishing our deterrence. It has an ongoing impact on funding and preparedness.



The big story is the effect of the economic downturn on the ability of government to provide funds or prioritize funds for homeland security purposes.



The looming world economic collapse is going to affect all aspects of our homeland security and defense initiatives.



The economy will limit our budgets and make us more vulnerable as many of our own newly unemployed population become desperate and/or sick.



The economic and fiscal crisis will exasperate an already challenged homeland security mission and will force the question of how the nation should optimize its security investment, given its declining strength in the world community. Hard choices will need to be made across government and every organization will fight for survival – especially the active components of the military.



I think an emerging homeland security issue is how the nation is going to balance expensive national security initiatives with the more pressing social and economic concerns of the citizenry.



The economy will be the primary driver of emerging definitions of the homeland security mission space in 2009.

The Nature of Homeland Security: Now a Second Tier Policy Issue?

Has the bar for national discourse been raised beyond the need for reflective thinking and strategic discussions as it relates to the concept of homeland security? I suggest the top homeland security-related issue of 2008 is that the general concept of homeland security is no longer a compelling national story that provides an impetus for the topic to be discussed in any substantive detail. The presidential election, downturn in the economy, Iraq, and Afghanistan appear to have consumed the nation's attention and left little room for discussions relating to numerous other issues of importance – including homeland security. While this lack of national discourse could be viewed positively – oftentimes such discussions only arrive after a dramatic man-made or natural disaster grabs the nation's attention – it might be argued that such discussions should occur during times of crisis and calm. In September 2008, the third most destructive U.S. disaster, Hurricane Ike, was responsible for eighty-five deaths and caused \$27 billion in damage. Yet, like the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, little national attention has

been given to the slow recovery efforts for tens of thousands of citizens who continue to be displaced from their communities. Based on the enormity and complexity of the issues our nation faces – continuing deaths in a trillion-dollar global war on terror, coupled with a trillion-dollar government bailout and economic stimulus package – I wonder if the nation has become conditioned to giving sustained attention solely to the most significant issues of the day, with homeland security destined to return to the public forum only after the next catastrophic failure.



The most pressing issue in homeland security in 2008 was not an event, but rather the continuing confusion and lack of clarity surrounding the term "homeland security." There is a dysfunctional absence of understanding about what constitutes "national security" and "homeland security," to say nothing of the fact that emergency management finds itself, at the federal level and within some states, buried within departments of homeland security, but not part of the national homeland security strategy (which deals exclusively with terrorism). There has been no national dialogue and consensus regarding the responsibilities of the federal government vis-à-vis state and local jurisdictions in terms of "homeland security." There has been no movement on a workable, comprehensive program that addresses illegal immigration issues, the borders remain porous, and our seaports, rail systems, and other infrastructure remain largely unprotected while the Secretary of Homeland Security has become an expert on the behavior of cyclonic advance and levee construction.



The top story is the emerging requirements of first defining and then structuring exactly what homeland security is. Is it economic, physical, environmental, health, energy... or all of those, with no practical gravitas placed on any one sector? We must nationally identify and modify our current behavior and expectations if we are going to actually have a policy or just another dance with money and innuendo.



Homeland security, conceptually, is about redefining. It is not about the organic creation of inherent value. This is demonstrated by observing that the lessons learned from Katrina were applied to Gustaf and Ike. The preparation and the recognition of responsibility were the two big homeland security milestones in 2008 for the federal government.



Homeland security has become second tier to other issues, such as the new administration, the economy, and housing, just to name a few. This will cause homeland security departments and professionals to compete for attention to get funding support for their programs.



The emerging homeland security issue is a conceptualization of homeland security as a bureaucratic paradigm not a unique theoretical discipline. The value of homeland security is the avenue it creates for government personnel to act non-possessively and, of course, the impetus to act at all.



The drawdown of forces in Iraq will actually cause a surplus of military personnel in the U.S. We are already seeing that trend in efforts to redefine the military's domestic role. As the active component competes for domestic relevance with the National Guard, you may see these two giants try to remodel homeland security for their own benefit. Some of this is already happening.



The important emerging issue is the future role of DHS in relation to national security. Think tanks, members of the U.S. Congress, and professional associations, for example, have two basic opposing views on emergency management, the role of FEMA, and responsibility for terrorism, border, and immigration control. In sum, the debate continues about the future organizational structure best suited nationally to deal with these issues. Some states are concerned that removal of FEMA would further erode its ability to deal with disasters. Others think better focus will come with a separate entity reporting to the president. Since Congress neither debated the creation of DHS nor the appropriate organizational government response to 9/11, I predict that 2009 will be the watershed year for debating major homeland security structural, policy, and budgetary changes with the new administration. The new team owes Congress the first ever quadrennial homeland security review, which requires an assessment of homeland security and recommendations for priorities.



The key emerging issue will be keeping the momentum going in the face of relative calm. We are fortunate not to have had strategic attacks on the homeland since 9/11. In the face of this calm, other competing interests will emerge such as the immigration/border issue, and an increase in global partners pushing back against U.S. requests. The predominant issue (absent an emergency) should be identifying a concise mission for DHS. I feel DHS needs to be engaged in preventing strategic level attacks on the U.S. and not preoccupied with disaster response. Move FEMA out.



The emerging issue is perception versus reality in terms of to what degree the federal government can or should provide a "national 911." Rather than focusing resources on building capacity at state and local levels, there is a perception (often fostered by self-serving appointees) that FEMA and DHS will "be there for you." This has led to misunderstandings at all levels and the under-funding of state agencies by state legislatures that, in the coming year, will result in diminished capacity to respond.



The time is now to think outside the box, deconstruct unnecessary bureaucracy, develop essential capabilities, and strengthen our communities at the core level.

Organizing for Homeland Security: Possible Futures, Emerging Issues

The biggest questions to emerge are how the new administration will handle homeland security, whether budgets will remain at current levels, and whether FEMA will stay in DHS.



The top emerging issue is the collapse of homeland security systems designed and built over the last few years. We've spent billions on homeland security-related issues, building capabilities and capacity on top of those capabilities. We are slowly eroding away the capacity and will be chipping away at capability very soon, capabilities which will take years to rebuild once they are lost.



An emerging issue is the level of interest and funding support for homeland security in the new administration. Public support and interest is at an all-time low and recent polls indicate that over 70 percent of the public feels safe and believes there will not be another terrorist attack. With the Department of Homeland Security barely five years old, this could be a make or break period for the whole concept. Look at the mounting political pressure to remove FEMA from DHS. Short of another attack I see homeland security losing both funding and status. This situation requires a clear perception and expression of homeland security's value by the new president. It also requires a strong commitment to strengthen the leadership and capabilities at DHS.



Because of economic constraints, we should expect more effective collaboration between the federal government and the local governments.



Expect to see more restructuring of homeland security efforts from separate operations into an integrated part of day-to-day operations. This will happen because it is a financial necessity.



A major emerging uncertainty is the future of state and local homeland security-specific offices. Most of them were created in the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001. As the mission of many homeland security offices has begun to "creep" into the arena of existing state and local emergency management offices, there seems to be increasing discussion about what the future mission of the offices of homeland security should be.



The concept of a "DHS" is fine and there is value to a cabinet level agency with oversight of the U.S. effort. Unfortunately, the turf wars continue and involve the FBI, CIA (and the entire intelligence community), as well as DHS. I doubt there is enough political will to properly align the agencies. The bright spot of the DHS is its legacy components and their mission focus.



A top issue according to several think tanks is merging the Homeland Security Council and the National Security Council (NSC). The announcement of a national security team by the president-elect included no person for a Homeland Security Council role. Merging the two entities would focus national policies and priorities on national security so federal departments and agencies would have a single entity in the White House. It would also focus discussions with Congress, perhaps leading to a reduction in the eighty-six committees and subcommittees dealing with the Department of Homeland Security. And if the incoming administration has an entity within the NSC dealing with homeland security, the governors would have a direct line on homeland security matters and understand the relationship between those issues and national security for budgetary and program decisions.



We are closer than ever to being attacked. Our adversaries will want to test a new president, and terrorism is not his number one agenda item. Jobs for Americans are number one. His national security team is a good one, but without his interest they will not have the success the current administration has not gotten credit for. The emerging issue will be: assuming we are attacked and the administration and Congress will again want to take some action, what should the Department of Homeland Security look like after a reorganization that is intended to better address the threat?

The Department of Homeland Security: Time of Opportunity

The DHS transition is an emerging issue. A radical change at this point will, in my view, waste a lot of money and time while making the country more vulnerable. That transition strikes me as the issue for the next year.



The change in administration represents the first time that another administration will take over DHS and the impending change and speculations about change represent a major issue for this embryonic agency. It is a tremendous opportunity to determine what works, what does not work, and how DHS may be structured and operated moving forward.



I think the issue continues to be the demarcation line between the role of the states and the role of big DHS. DHS does not have a large impact on the states except for the grant money. The [Michael] Sheehan book, *Crush the Cell*, said it well when

supporting the idea of moving the grant function out of DHS and back to a smaller entity. DHS still needs to decide what the department's core mission is. The all hazards approach is fine when all is quiet. But when the weather event occurs it draws away from the reason DHS was formed: to deter bad guys from doing bad things. The components that comprise DHS are the true success story. The big DHS is nowhere near as relevant.



Having a new homeland security secretary could change the future of homeland security.



The central question is which aspects of DHS and FEMA policy and structure will be maintained, modified, or overthrown by the new administration?



The election has created an opportunity to look at the Department and mission in a new and innovative way. Good homeland security is fueled by new thought.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency: Will You Stay or Will You Go?

The top story was the discussion regarding whether to move FEMA out from DHS and have it as a stand-alone agency. The discussion took on new energy with the upcoming change in the executive branch.



There is a specter that FEMA may be removed from the United States Department of Homeland Security. This is a significant homeland security concern.



The top story of the year was the resurgence of FEMA. By proving that the "new" FEMA is not the Katrina FEMA, it has practically insured its continued organizational placement within DHS.



The lack of attention being paid to the aftermath of the Gulf hurricane season was a top story. I think I would call it Katrina fatigue. The perceived failures of FEMA are getting little traction in the media, not because they are not failures, but because people are too tired of hearing about debris removal and the lack of housing. Of a similar ilk, I am shocked at how little attention we seem to be paying to bin Laden and al Qaeda. The same kind of fatigue dynamic is at play perhaps.



The issue to watch for is the effort to remove FEMA from the Department of Homeland Security. As DHS is restructured in the new administration, separating FEMA from traditional emergency management might be a defining moment.



At the 2008 International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) meeting in Kansas City, the group coalesced around the idea of making FEMA a separate stand-alone department again (separate from DHS). There is evidence that law enforcement is trying to become a solo part of homeland security. And with this development, emergency management agencies think they should be separate too. I am seeing early signs of increasingly fractured homeland security planning focus at the local level. Disciplines want their money and they don't want to be bothered by anyone while they spend it.



FEMA will stay and remain with DHS. What the [Obama] transition team has realized is that if FEMA were removed from DHS, DHS would essentially become a law enforcement and counterterrorism agency. The result to both agencies and to the homeland security ecosystem would be less collaboration, less resiliency, less flexibility and greater turf issues and resources battles. In fact, maybe DHS should become more FEMA-like.⁷



The question of "FEMA, in or out," has centered mainly on which bureaucratic organizational arrangement best serves the need for an effective agency to lead federal efforts to support state and local governments during major disasters. While it is apparent to me that FEMA and its representatives in the field will never again have either credibility or authority within either the interagency or intragovernmental worlds while buried deep within DHS, this is not the pivotal issue. The more important issue is *to what degree does having FEMA in DHS detract from the secretary's primary role of preventing the next terrorist attack and protecting the nation?* Having the secretary spending three nights in a joint field office during a major hurricane event, with a great probability of being unable to disengage because of the storm, and focused on hurricane behavior and levee construction makes no sense. Governor Napolitano should focus on her responsibilities for our protection and let the FEMA administrator deal with preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating the effects of any event, man-made or natural.

The Good Things

The lack of a major terrorist incident in the United States was a significant homeland security issue in 2008.



The top issue was that George W. Bush exited the world stage without getting any credit for keeping us safe for over seven years, and especially in the run-up to the 2008 election where terrorists could have influenced the American public into voting for John McCain. That would have provided better opportunities for them to fundraise against someone they have wrongly considered to be an evil president.



The response to the Gulf hurricanes (as well as the Midwest floods, and the Western wildfires) was considerably improved from past disasters. While not of the magnitude of Katrina, the level of coordination and response helped to restore the confidence in government to handle such problems.



The top story is the protection of our nation from dangerous people by effectively controlling the borders. DHS has strengthened the screening processes at border crossings to keep dangerous people out, yet balanced this so as not to hinder commerce and those who seek to come to the United States through legal channels.



A top story is the concept of having a deployable police force that can respond within or outside the state as the need arises. FEMA is studying the Illinois Law Enforcement Assistance System (ILEAS), which was used to deploy over 300 officers to Katrina and 100 to the Republican national convention in St. Paul Minnesota. It is an exciting concept, and to my knowledge no other state has such a versatile law-enforcement group equipped and trained to respond as a single unit. As forest fires, floods, and other such events continue, deployable response forces from the states that can assist in the disaster will, I believe, grow in importance.



Private sector and personal preparedness are getting better. I think September as the DHS preparedness month is getting traction and it needs to catch on faster.



Homeland security has become more than a department or mission. It is a part of everyone's daily life. Even on cable TV, from the news to the food network, the need to take responsibility for protecting yourself and those around you has become the new culture. It has been a good thing.



Americans are more sophisticated and knowledgeable than they are sometimes given credit for. It seems that Americans still fear terrorist attacks, and support broad efforts at the local, state, and federal level to prevent them. But there does seem to be a sense that America must maintain its moral compass and not alienate itself from the rest of the world. Honesty by its government remains important, and being the leader by example of democratic principles for the world is still important. The emerging issue may be that Americans want strength against

terrorism. But evenhandedness in policy and government accountability is very important to Americans.

The Threat: Are we more vulnerable now than we've been in the past decade?

I believe we are more vulnerable now than we've been in the past decade. The administration change will reduce our capabilities, but even more important, our economic condition makes us an even more inviting target.



The Southern Border

Mexican border security is the top homeland security issue. Currently Mexico is being destabilized by drug cartels. More than 4,000 people were killed in 2008 in Mexican drug wars. This leaves our southern border at risk. The instability of Mexico presents opportunities for safe havens for terrorists to emerge from our southern neighbor.



The escalating violence along the U.S. and Mexican border is a threat. Further excursions and continued drug violence may result in greater opportunities for terrorists and the inevitable presence of federal and military forces. I view border control as a priority focus for the next administration.



The top issue is the Mexican drug war and its possible nexus to terrorism.



The threat to the U.S. southern border by gangs working in cooperation with criminal organizations may become a concern relative to human smuggling as an avenue for terrorists to penetrate the U.S.



Violence in Mexico is an emerging threat. The U.S. does not seem overly concerned about our next-door neighbor's deteriorating security and the inability of the Mexican government to maintain a monopoly of force. The U.S. counter-narcotics-focused policy for Mexico is inadequate to the task and replicates the disastrous mistakes made in Colombia during the 1990s. The U.S. spent billions of dollars in the counter-drug operations in Colombia without significant results in reducing drug trafficking or increasing security in that country. It was not until the U.S. government changed the focus of the policy to security and reestablishing the Colombian government's sovereignty over its territory (in 2001) that the situation was brought under control. Mexico has become the main avenue for drug trafficking into the United States. Therefore, there are billions of dollars in play, which is giving the traffickers the means to outman and outgun the Mexican government. If the present trends continue and the Mexican government loses

control of its northern border, the United States will have a major security challenge on its hands. An unstable border increases the potential for violence spilling over into the United States, provides smuggling opportunities to terrorists, and increases demand for security resources at the expense of other areas. The Merida Plan will not work until it focuses on increasing the capabilities of the Mexican government to reestablish sovereign control over its territory.

Domestic Threats

The top story of the year was U.S. citizens of Somali descent traveling to the corner of Africa to participate in jihad.



The top story was the growing radicalization of Muslim enclaves in the United States.



I feel that the prison radicalization of terrorists is an emerging threat to the U.S.A. These prisoners are locked up in our jails and then left there to be forgotten, "out of sight, out of mind." Only later do we find out they are being radicalized in our system. When they are released they are emboldened to cause terror in our communities. This must be dealt with sooner rather than later.



An emerging issue is the American born and bred terrorists like the KKK and paramilitary groups that will proliferate following the elevation to presidency of a black man. They are the next generation of Timothy McVeighs and Nazi skinheads.

Cyber Threats

Emerging to me means maybe we have known about it before, but it has never gone mainstream. I think nonviolent threats such as cyber attacks and financial influence for the purposes of creating fear are emerging homeland security issues.



Cyber security is the top issue in the most underreported story of homeland security today. There has been some press about the Chinese and quasi-independent entity efforts to penetrate the United States government and private-sector networks. Many of these efforts have been successful and represent a significant threat to homeland and national security. Given the fact that the U.S. is totally dependent on cyber technology to run the security, defense, economy, and infrastructure of the nation, there should be a major synchronized national effort to address vulnerabilities. The cyber realm offers tempting opportunities for sophisticated state and non-state actors to damage the U.S. in the physical, psychological, and economic domains. One needs only to look at Hollywood's rendition of cyber warfare in the movie *Live Free or Die Hard* to imagine the potential damage that can be inflicted to our nation. Granted, there have been some government efforts in this area, but not the focus and resources that we place

on WMD or terrorist attacks. What keeps me awake at night is that these penetrations are not seeking to do damage now. Instead, they may be opening doors for future coordinated attack that may inflict severe damage on the nation. If we apply al Qaeda tactics to this domain, these penetrations could be seen as probes, reconnaissance before the big operation.



Information security is a top concern. Currently the United States government does not have a synchronized and unified means to secure the systems that enable all our command and control, operations, administration, and resource management for homeland security.



The cyber security issue is nearly as nebulous and complex as the environment in which it lives. It spans the intersection between the public and the private sectors.



Cyber security and critical infrastructure protection are issues that have received some attention, but I think they will be the next major issues for DHS.

Threats from Other Nations

Global issues other than terrorism are significant. Although terrorism is important, there are other longer-range issues we need to pay attention to, such as the emerging powers China and India. Russia is rearing its head too. Although these countries probably will not attack us, they do represent security concerns. They are shifting the balance of power. Proliferation of WMDs – materials and knowledge – is also a concern related to these countries, especially Russia. We may need Russia to help us counterbalance China one day.



American foreign and security policy and concerns tend to be shortsighted. While these are important, we need to look ahead to mid- to longer-range concerns as well. India, Russia, and China (especially) fall into this category. Space security is starting to emerge as an area of concern. More countries, some with WMD, are getting "up" there (in space). What policies and strategies do we have? And also, how are we going to counterbalance China in the future as it is emerging as a "great" power? China is investing in Africa – an area we have long ignored.



A significant emerging trend is the continued evolution from the bipolar world of the Cold War to a post 9/11 "multi- bipolar" or even a "non-polar" world. This has resulted in a rise in the number of actors able to compete with or threaten the interests of the United States across the foreign and domestic divide in homeland defense and security. They range from great power nation states (emerging peer competitors), or even lesser nation states, to "sovereignty-free" actors (criminal, terror networks, super empowered groups, and super empowered individuals).

An example of the emerging capabilities of these new actors occurred with the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008. On the same day that the American president went on national television to voice support for Georgia against invasion by Russian conventional military forces, a criminal network believed to be operating from Russia was conducting cyber attacks against the Georgian government from computer servers located in United States. This action completely shattered any notion of a foreign-domestic divide in homeland defense and security.



Asymmetric wars, as opposed to asymmetric warfare, may be our greatest threat. With so many nations, factions, religions, and assorted scoundrels who hate the U.S., the possibility exists of combined nation state financial war, nation state traditional war, WMD by non-state actors, asymmetric warfare by non-state actors, all against the U.S. These will be wars that take advantage of the opportunity of mutual hatred and actions. It could be a feeding frenzy on a much larger, but wounded shark.



The instability of Pakistan remains a top concern. Pakistan is important because we don't want to provoke another war; two fronts is enough. But we need to deal with the insurgents who use it as a staging area. This is a very tricky balancing act. We are being spread too thin in the Middle East. The strain is showing. We are on a precipice here, and we need to handle this one very carefully so we don't exacerbate our overextension, yet still maintain our security and our credibility.



A critical issue is the potential civil war or war between India and Pakistan.



The instability of Pakistan, while now a concern, is really just starting to emerge in its seriousness.



I believe that Russia and Venezuela partnering together is a potential problem for the U.S. The economic downturn may have temporarily mitigated this threat.



The stability of Iraq is a critical emerging issue for homeland security and is largely dependent upon the U.S. Army successfully mentoring the Iraqi security forces to operate under rule of law. The underlying issue here is the Army's ability to learn and use civilian law enforcement methods.



I really believe the threat (poison and hazards) posed by Chinese imports is bubbling under the surface. This is further amplified by the world economy. I believe our government – the FDA – is impotent to really do anything to correct

Chinese behavior because of the sheer volume of the imports, the low cost of products from China, and our insatiable appetite for cheap products.

Public Health Threats

A top homeland security related story for public health is the ongoing discussion of implementation of the Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act. The Act will require a match and maintenance of funding support from the states for programs that had previously not required state funding support at any level. The implementation process has been awkward, with great resistance from the states. The maintenance of funding has a floating target that consists of the average of the funding from the previous two years. There is concern that the required match would then be rolled into the previous year's maintenance of funding numbers, requiring different match sources to be found. Discussions about these issues continue among ASTHO (Association of State and Territorial Health Officials), DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services), ASPR (Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response), and CDC (Centers for Disease Control), as well as staffers from Congress.



The FBI revelations related to the anthrax letter attacks count as a top homeland security issue for 2008. Considering this was the nation's sole data point for an actual bioterrorism event, it is highly significant that the attack originated from inside the U.S. bio defense apparatus. Added significance lies in the fact the event was perpetrated by a U.S. Army scientist responsible for the testing of the anthrax vaccine and that, according to the FBI, the motive was that the vaccine program was "failing" and about to be canceled at the time of the attacks. Considering these facts, the most compelling aspect of this event remains the fact that no one from the government has directed a review of the vaccine program as a result of the FBI revelations, but instead ordered more vaccine, which secures the story as the top homeland security issue of 2008 and likely the decade.



This problem is not exactly emerging, but it is still a big problem that is getting bigger: the public health and emergency health infrastructure of this nation is inadequate and it is shrinking every year. We don't have enough beds for a mass casualty incident involving tens of people. Hurricane Ike wiped out UTMB [University of Texas Medical Branch, at Galveston], the level one trauma center covering Texas City and Galveston. Should there be an event even a fraction of the size of the Texas City disaster, those casualties would need to be airlifted or driven fifty miles north to Houston for treatment. What other trauma centers are being lost due to budget issues, especially given the economic downturn?



I think the bioterror lab standard issue is going to loom large in the next year or two.



While threats from intentional use of traditional biological weapons (in particular anthrax) remain a concern, the dramatic increase in drug-resistant infectious diseases adds a different dimension to the bio threat. Such "hardened bugs" (e.g., MRSA, XDR-TB) present a potential threat to the nation (and beyond). This might come through a naturally emerging infection or through an intentional introduction of the pathogen as a terrorist weapon. In either case, the lack of novel antimicrobial therapy for these organisms is a concern and has significant homeland security implications.

Other Threats

The recently released WMD prevention report ["World at Risk: The Report of the Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism"⁸] cited rumors of the potential for a tactical nuclear weapons event on domestic soil. As this was the first government-related source I encountered that mentions the possibility, I believe this ranks up there as a significant emerging threat.



One thing emerging is the issue of pirate activity off the coast of Africa. If this catches on worldwide, it could have a significant impact on trade and a snowball effect with other industries (such as oil).



There remains a problem with small boats. It is especially related to the continued success of pirates and the increased successful use of semi-submersible vessels by drug smugglers. Success in both these areas could embolden terrorists to copy and use those tactics to attack the United States.



I believe that as the economic crisis continues domestic acts of piracy and sabotage will likely increase. Homeland security needs to pre-identify [those threat] patterns with an eye toward prevention and response.



The relationship among illegal immigration, extended economic upheaval, and unemployment are ingredients for a "recipe" of significant unrest and fear.



Seeing how Congress and DHS initially made common cause on *chemical* security issues, only to break ranks, highlights the lack of a consistent approach and the subordination of security issues to petty politics



From a local perspective, the top homeland security story was the terrorist firebombing attacks in Santa Cruz. Members of an animal rights group were the suspected perpetrators. This was a significant event for the area unrelated to

Muslim extremist organizations. And yet the attacks did not result in any significant alarm for the region.



Election security was the top issue. Based on the candidates, there was an increased potential for domestic attack intended to disrupt the presidential election. *That* attack did not happen. Why not?



An emerging issue is the implications of the potential encroachment of Sharia-compliant banking into world economic systems, particularly our own. Our collective greed does not differentiate between sources of money, even when potentially threatening national security. Our own government is likely to be complicit in advancing this bastardized form of banking and therefore fall prey to the weaknesses it could exploit. The integration of religious zealotry with banking has potentially far-reaching implications: the implementation of subtle strategies to replace capitalism being one of them.

The Culture of Preparedness: "Waiting Until We Bleed Again"

I'm concerned about the incident attention syndrome – our inability to stay focused on the threats. I fear that we are just starting out on our journey with homeland security. Perhaps we will not start paying attention until we bleed again.



I think that the arrests and conviction of the individuals planning an attack at Fort Dix in New Jersey was the top homeland security-related story in 2008. It was a great example of the use of citizens as points of information, local police as information gatherers, and a federally-led task force to investigate and intercept the attackers before they could complete their plan.



While not widely reported, the fact that the terror alert color-coded level has been stuck on orange for the whole year in the absence of any specific threat makes a mockery of the entire system of alerts and citizen engagement in the so-called "war on terrorism." We need to change the war metaphor to "The Global Challenge of Terrorism."



Resiliency seems to be the emerging issue: both how to build resiliency and how to sustain resiliency for responder communities in the nation at large.



Based on discussions and meetings I've attended, the 2008 themes appears to be about building a culture of preparedness with a focus on improved resiliency. Building resiliency includes developing a disaster mental health focus as well as training and education for responder communities.



What have Americans been asked to sacrifice in combating terrorism at home and abroad?



The further we get away from 2001, the harder it is to get people to care about preparedness or spending time and money to make the nation more secure. We – the government – do a horrible job of conveying the message to the people that we need to stay vigilant, that we need to take preparedness activities to heart. It is a more basic problem than that: we have not figured out an effective way to get our message through to the public so that they will actually listen to what is being said and act accordingly. We do a good job of scaring people; so good that people are ignoring the message, or taking it very cynically. We need to find a way to effectively, realistically, and honestly convey the true risk so that people will believe it, understand what is in it for them, and take the appropriate action. Or perhaps we should just write off this generation and concentrate on the kids, just like we did with seatbelts and bike helmets.

Meta Hazards – Things We Do To Ourselves

The top issue has to do with economic security and infrastructure – water, food, and energy shortages. The implications of an economic fall due to a lack of food, energy, or water are huge. We need to do a better job of addressing these issues long-term.



Economic security and food, water, energy shortages: I think these issues have the potential to cause more harm than all forms of terrorism if they are not addressed.



The fluctuations in the price of oil, the continued instability in the Middle East, and the increasing maritime piracy off the Horn of Africa have highlighted the importance of energy security to U.S. national security and homeland security. The recent drop in oil prices will probably cause most Americans to forget about this threat and, unfortunately, the opportunity to rapidly develop alternatives to foreign oil imports may be lost.



Global warming may have a significant impact on our current all-hazards homeland security environment.



Climate change is the next top story. Its effects on our sources of energy, new international conflicts over natural resources, and migration flows due to sea level rise and desertification will have a direct effect on the security of the United States.



The issue of water is in an embryonic state. Whatever the cause of climate changes, many large population centers, especially in California, are going to be defined by the utilization and access to water. As water becomes more contested, security of the homeland will be more tenuous.



The emerging issue will be natural disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. I believe the severity of storms will increase because of climate warming.

Funding Concerns

A reemerging homeland security issue is the prioritization of funding for prevention, preparation, response, and recovery in an environment where available funds are decreasing. Threat analysis, needs assessments, and the prioritization of resource needs are becoming increasingly important.



The top story is the bastardization of the UASI [Urban Areas Security Initiative] program by successful law enforcement lobbyists at the federal level. Law enforcement lobbyists carved a 25 percent earmark for law enforcement in the UASI grant program by providing questionable information to grant guidance writers and to Congress. It never "made the papers" that, in many cases, this has had a negative impact at local levels.

Professionalization of Homeland Security

The top story is the absence of a professional development system for homeland security warriors that would serve to develop a homeland security culture and lead to the effective assimilation of the twenty-two disparate legacy agencies into a common culture, while recognizing differences in specific roles and missions (much as the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force have differences). At present there is no real capability for such a professional development system, despite some well-meaning efforts by the executive branch. For there to be a coherent homeland security culture, encompassing federal, state, local, and private-sector players, there must be a system developed that is based on established doctrine, education, training, and field and Washington experience. At present, Washington insiders and youthful staffers have developed plans, procedures, and doctrine based on a total absence of real world experience, understanding of how both the interagency and intergovernmental worlds actually work, and with an arrogance born of ignorance. In the military, admirals and generals become senior leaders and policymakers based on careers of field and headquarters experience and professional education, not totally on political affiliations. The development of such a [homeland security] system will not be accomplished overnight. It will require vision and commitment by Congress and the executive branch to make such a system a reality.



The Department of Defense failed again for the second straight year to use the \$3.5 million Congress approved to establish the nation's first homeland security and homeland defense PhD program. Failing to develop a credentialed cadre of competent leaders to educate the current and next generation of homeland security professionals may be the most profound strategic mistake made in 2008.

Information and Intelligence

Overall the term "information sharing" has become more of a buzzword than a reality. There are still too many competing efforts to share information between federal and "state and local" entities (state and local are not the same).



I believe information sharing and intelligence tops the list of homeland security concerns in 2008. Two examples include the lack of information sharing during the Democratic and Republican national conventions. An example of improvements needed in the intelligence field is the recent attacks in India. Similar attacks could happen anywhere in the U.S.A.



The tragedies of 911 have meant the world now has a dramatically different view of national security. Governments must recognize the critical need to share and disseminate information, particularly spatial information across agencies and jurisdictions both efficiently and economically.



I believe there is a critical misunderstanding about the value of information sharing among government as well as private agencies. The lack of communication has reached critical mass.



The top story is the admission by the Maryland State police that they improperly conducted surveillance on activists in Maryland. The lawsuits that result from this issue could have national implications for the operation of state and local intelligence units nationwide. It is not a nationwide story yet, but it will be when the legal proceedings get underway.

Critical Infrastructure: Jobs and Security

A significant aspect of President Obama's economic stimulus plan is to request Congress appropriate hundreds of billions of dollars towards revitalizing the nation's infrastructure. While much of this money will be devoted to improving existing infrastructure, new energy-conserving and environmentally friendly projects are also being proposed. This program may have positive results for the nation's economy and critical infrastructure viability. But it is conceivable that

these same efforts could introduce predictable and unforeseen homeland security challenges.



The projected investment in infrastructure renewal by the new administration should be planned in accordance with prioritized national critical infrastructure and security concerns. The concern is not to haphazardly push funding projects for the sake of stimulating the economy.

Criminal Justice and Homeland Security

I feel the top homeland security issue is the inability to identify what the differences are between terrorism and criminal activity and how to deal with people who are involved.



I think there is going to be a very clear nexus between domestic criminal activity (such as fraud, identity theft, and narcotics trafficking) and terrorist activity. Separating the two activities would be a mistake since important indicators may be missed during investigations.



The top issue is how to deal with detainees held at Guantánamo Bay. Any method of dealing with these folks, whether bringing them to the United States for trial or returning them to their native countries, will have substantial homeland security implications.



Risk management continues to be an emerging issue. Risk management is the process of identifying, analyzing, assessing, and communicating risk and accepting, avoiding, transferring, or controlling it to an acceptable level at an acceptable cost. Homeland security risks are complex and cross-cutting. No single entity is able to effectively balance these risks independently. Instead risk management depends on being able to integrate a wide range of homeland security activities. In most cases, there are no integrated frameworks in place to ensure a collaborative approach to the analysis, assessment, and management of risks.



An emerging issue within law enforcement is the standards the National Tactical Officers Association has promoted for SWAT teams. These "national standards" will eliminate SWAT teams in small- to medium-sized jurisdictions, unless there is regionalization, which is fraught with political, training, equipment, response time, and procedural challenges. The elimination of these small SWAT teams will affect homeland security when an event is well outside a large metropolitan or UASI area.

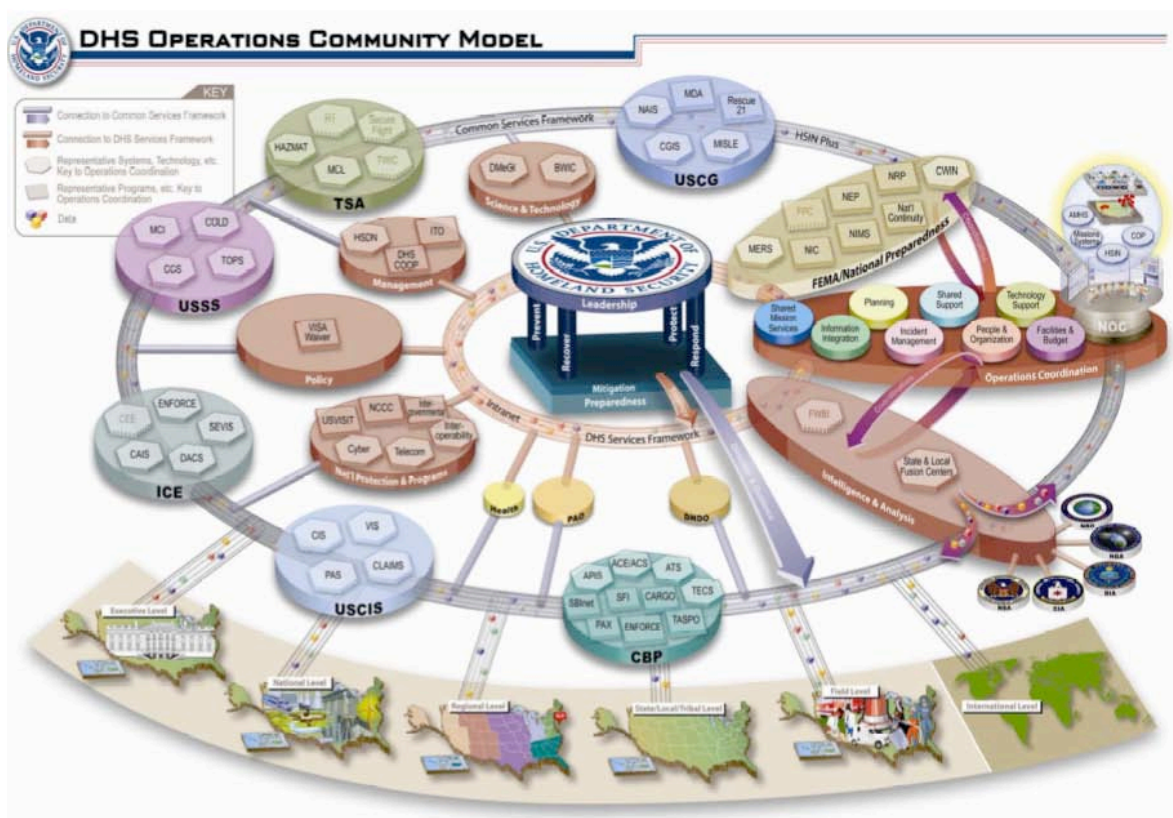


Security clearances for non-law-enforcement personnel continue to be an issue. The absence of clearances limits information sharing. The goal of timely clearances needs to be achieved to allow better review of information by affected agencies.

THE IMAGE OF HOMELAND SECURITY

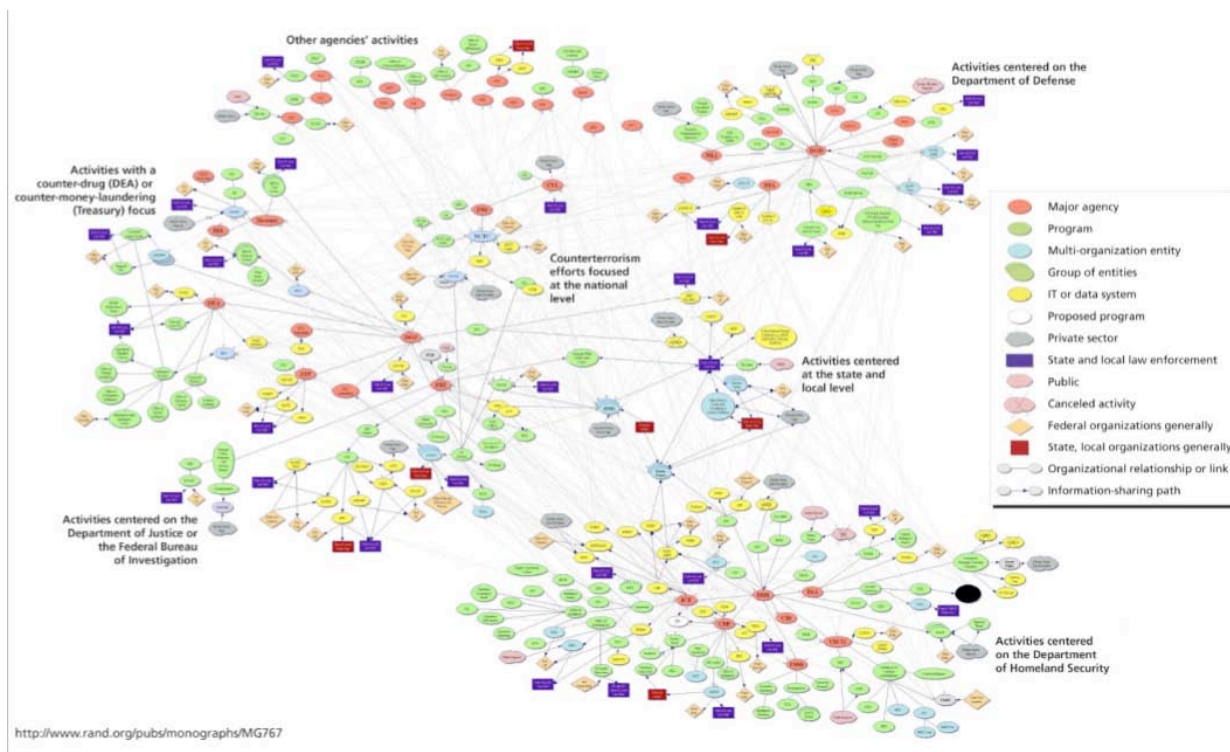
This review of homeland security in 2008 closes with three graphics that are candidates for the Homeland Security Image of the Year. The first image portrays in strikingly non-linear fashion the organization of the Department of Homeland Security.⁹

DHS Operations Community Model



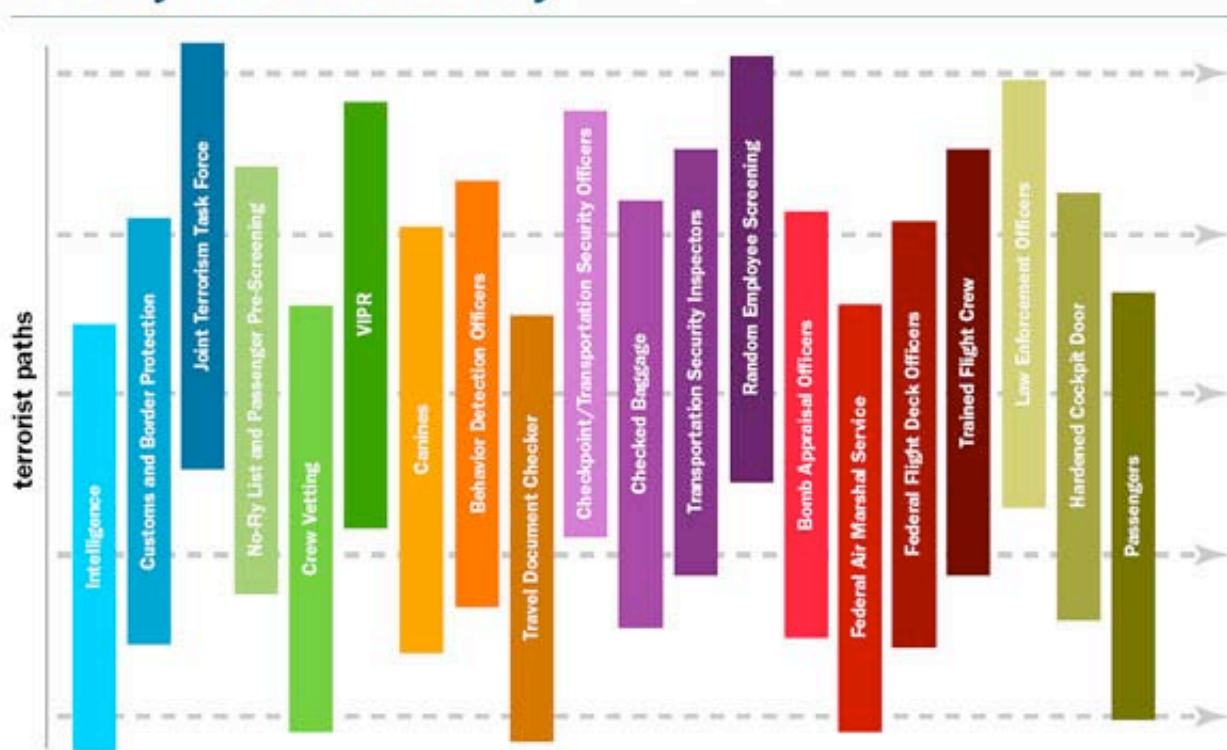
Source: Booz Allen Hamilton, *Mission Blueprint* (Washington, DC: DHS Office of Operations Coordination, 2007).

The second picture, from a RAND study, depicts the current U.S. domestic intelligence enterprise. It is an image to be viewed, for the aims of this article, more for its complexity than its detail. The report from which it is derived, along with a very readable copy of the chart, is available elsewhere.¹⁰



The final picture is the Transportation Security Administration's visualization of its twenty layers of security. Additional information about the logic behind the strategy is also available elsewhere.¹¹

20 Layers of Security



ONE LAST LOOK AT 2008

As noted in last year's review,¹² a tag cloud is an image that displays a set of words. The size of each word is proportional to the frequency with which it appears. The bigger the word in the cloud, the more frequently it appeared in the article. The following tag cloud depicts the semantic field created from the responses to this year's survey.¹³ It represents one integrated perception of homeland security in the year 2008. You are invited to construct, and share, your own story.

"Every person takes the limits of their own field of vision for the limits of the world."
 -Arthur Schopenhauer (1788 – 1860)



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¹ The seventy-four people who responded to this survey included graduates and current participants in the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security's (CHDS) master's degree and executive leaders programs, CHDS faculty, Mobile Education Team members, NPS staff, and other people who periodically participate in CHDS homeland security activities. In large measure they are the authors of this review, and I am the amanuensis. However, none of the people who participated in this survey are responsible for my interpretations of their responses; nor do their observations necessarily represent anything other than their personal, not their official, views.

² Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction, *World at Risk: The Report of the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism* (Vintage, 2008).

³ See "Remarks by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff at the 2008 End of the Year Address," at http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/speeches/sp_1229632529576.shtm.

⁴ D. Boyd, L. Dunn, L., and others, *Why Have We Not Been Attacked Again? Competing and Complementary Hypotheses for Homeland Attack Frequency*. Defense Threat Reduction Agency and Science Applications International Corporation (June 2008).

⁵ Chertoff, *Remarks*.

⁶ Topics not mentioned include the sentencing of Jose Padilla, Amtrak's and Washington Metro's decision to randomly screen carry on baggage, the DNI threat assessment about al Qaeda's improved ability to attack within the United States by recruiting and training new operatives, organizational clashes between the FBI and the New York City police department over counterterrorism programs, political accommodations in the REAL ID program, the appointment of Kenneth Wainstein as the president's homeland security adviser (replacing Frances Townsend), changes in the terrorist watch list, the release of more information about the legal opinions that informed the first years of the Bush administration's terrorism strategy, states and cities objecting to federal security funding program emphasis on terrorism, successes and difficulties with constructing the fence along the Mexican border, an American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials report indicating that one in four American bridges need major repairs or upgrades, the delay of the proposed Air Force cyberspace command, an active duty Army brigade assigned to NORTHCOM, a conviction in the Holy Land Foundation trial, unsafe produce, Google using web searches to track the spread of flu activity, and homeland security set to become a reality television show in January. There are many other topics that could have been covered. It was a busy year.

⁷ This "response" was not generated by the survey. Someone who interviewed a member of the transition team brought it to my attention. I included it in this section for its unique insight into the FEMA and DHS issue.

⁸ Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction, *World at Risk*.

⁹ CORRECTION, February 9, 2009: Thank you to Derek Rieksts for providing the source information for this diagram, which is from a 2006-2007 study, *Mission Blueprint*, commissioned from Booz Allen Hamilton by the Office of Operations Coordination (OPS) at the Department of Homeland Security.

¹⁰ Gregory F. Treverton, *Reorganizing U.S. Domestic Intelligence: Assessing the Options* (Washington, DC: RAND, October 2008), <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG767/>

¹¹ Kip Hawley, "Strengthening Security Through a Layered Approach," *Layers of Security: What We Do* (TSA Website), http://www.tsa.gov/what_we_do/layers/index.shtm.

¹² Christopher Bellavita, "Changing Homeland Security: The Year in Review — 2007," *Homeland Security Affairs* IV, no. 1 (January 2008), <http://www.hsaj.org/?article=4.1.1R>

¹³ The list used for the 2008 tag cloud was refined by eliminating common words (e.g., "is," "the") and words not directly related to homeland security (such as "ago," "biggest," "recently," et al.). I also eliminated the term "Homeland Security" since it appeared so frequently. The cloud was produced from the online resources at <http://www.tagcrowd.com>.